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the Actresses to Court.*

Dec. 2, 1780, by T. Worman N^o 144, Fleet Street.



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THE
ADVENTURES

OF

Gil Blas of Santillane.

A NEW TRANSLATION,

By T. SMOLLETT, M.D.

AUTHOR OF RODERICK RANDOM.

VOL. VIII.

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ADVENTURES

OF THE



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THE
ADVENTURES
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GIL BLAS of Santillane.

[Continuation of CHAP. XIII. BOOK XI.]

MEANWHILE our blood flowed apace, and we grew weaker and weaker : nevertheless, wounded as we were, we had strength enough to go to the town of Villarcjo, which was but two gun-shots from the field of battle. We alighted at the first inn we came to, and sending for surgeons, one was brought, who had the reputation of being expert in his profession : he examined our wounds, which he found dangerous, then dressed them, and next day, after having taken off the dressings declared that the wounds of Don Blas was mortal ; he judged more favourably of mine, and his prognostics were fulfilled.

Combados hearing his doom, thought of nothing but preparing for death : he likewise dispatched an express to inform his wife of what had happened, and of his present melancholy situation ; upon which

Donna Helena setting out immediately, soon arrived at Villarejo, her mind disturbed with a disquiet which had two different causes: the danger in which her husband was, and the dread of feeling, at sight of me, a flame which was but half extinguished, revive, created a terrible agitation in her breast. "Madam, (said Don Blas, when she came into his presence) you arrive time enough to receive my last adieu: I am going to die, and I regard my death as the punishment of heaven for having, by a deceit, deprived you of Don Gaston. Far from murmuring at my fate, I exhort you to restore to him the heart which I unjustly seized." Donna Helena answered only by her tears; and truly, it was the best reply she could make, as she was not as yet so much detached from me, as to forget the artifice which he had practised, to make her break her vows.

As the surgeon had prognosticated, Combados died of his wounds, in less than three days, while mine indicated a speedy cure. The young widow, who was wholly ingrossed by the care of transporting her husband's corps to Corio, in order to perform all the funeral honours which she owed to his ashes, departed from Villarejo, after having enquired (through pure politeness) about my health. As soon as I could follow her, I set out also for Coria, where my recovery being compleated, my aunt Donna Eleonora, and Don George de Galisteo resolved that Helena and I should be married forthwith, lest fortune should again part us by some unlucky accident. This marriage was celebrated in private, on account of the too recent death of Don Blas; and a few days after, I returned to Madrid with Donna Helena. As I had exceeded the time prescribed by the count-duke for my journey, I was afraid that he had given to another the lieutenancy which he had promised to me: but he had not disposed of it, and was so good as to admit the excuses which I made for my delay.

"I am

"I am now (continued Cogollos) lieutenant of the Spanish guards, am pleased with my employment, and have contracted some agreeable friends, with whom I live very happily." "I wish I could say as much (cried Don Andrea) "but I am very far from being satisfied with my condition: I have lost my post, which was pretty advantageous; and I have no friends who have credit enough to procure me such another." "Pardon me, Signior Andrea, said I, smiling, you have in me a friend who is good for something. I have already said that I am still better beloved by the count-duke, than ever I was by the duke of Lerma; and you have assurance to tell me to my face, that you have not a friend who can procure a good post for you. Have I not once before done you such a piece of service? Remember that by the interest of the archbishop of Grenada, I was the occasion of your being named to exercise an employment at Mexico, where you would have made your fortune, if love had not detained you in the city of Alicant; and I am at present more capable of serving you, having the ear of the prime-minister." "I trust wholly to you then, replied Tordesillas, but, added he, smiling in his turn, pray don't send me to New-Spain; I would not go thither, if I was to be made chief judge of Mexico."

We were interrupted in this part of our conversation by Donna Helena, who came into the hall, and whose amiable person equalled the charming idea which I had formed of her beauty. "Madam, said Cogollos to her, this is Signior de Santillane, of whom you have heard me speak, and whose agreeable company hath often suspended my sorrows while I was in prison." "Yes, madam, said I to Donna Helena, my conversation pleased him, because you was always the subject of it." Don George's daughter made a modest reply to my compliment; after which I took my leave of this couple, protesting that I was ravish-

ed to find their long passion was at length crowned by a happy marriage. Then addressing myself to Tordefillas, I desired him to give me his direction, which when I received, "Without bidding you adieu, Don Andrea, said I, I hope in less than eight days, you will see that I have power as well as friendship." My words were soon verified; the very next day the count-duke furnished me with an occasion to oblige the keeper. "Santillane, said his excellency, the place of governor of the royal prison at Valladolid is vacant: it brings in more than three hundred pistoles per annum, and I am resolved to bestow it upon thee." "I would not have it, my lord, answered I, were it worth ten thousand ducats yearly: I renounce all posts that I cannot enjoy, without removing from your grace." "But, resumed the minister, thou mayest very well enjoy this, without being obliged to leave Madrid, except to go sometimes to Valladolid, to visit the prison." You may say what you please (I replied); I will not accept of that employment, but on condition that I shall be allowed to resign in favour of a brave gentleman called Don Andrea de Tordefillas, formerly keeper of the tower of Segovia: I should love to make him that present, as an acknowledgment for the kind treatment I received from him during my confinement."

The minister laughing at this discourse, said, "I see, Gil Blas, thou hast a mind to make a governor of a royal prison, as thou hast made a viceroy. Well, be it so, my friend, I give to thee this vacant place for Tordefillas; but tell me freely, what advantage thou wilt reap from it: for I don't believe thee fool enough to employ thy credit for nothing." "My lord, answered I, ought not a man to pay his debts? Don Andrea, in the most disinterested manner, did me all the service he could: ought not I to requite his generosity?" "You are become very disinterested, Mr. Santillane, said his excellency, I think you were not

not so much so, under the last minister." "I own it, said I, my morals were corrupted by bad example: as every thing was then put to sale, I conformed myself to the fashion; and as every thing is now given away, I have resumed my integrity."

I procured, then, the government of the royal prison of Valladolid, for Don Andrea, whom, in a little time, I sent to that city, as well satisfied with his new settlement, as I was with the opportunity of acquitting myself of the obligations I owed him.

C H A P. XIV.

Sanfillane visits the poet Nunnez: an account of the persons whom he found, and the discourse which he heard at his lodgings.

ONE afternoon, I was seized with an inclination of visiting the Asturian poet, being curious to know how he was lodged. I went accordingly, to the house of Don Bertrand Gomez de Ribero, and asking for Nunnez, "He does not live here, (said the porter) but lodges there at present, having hired the back-side of the house." So saying, he pointed to a house in the neighbourhood, whither I went, and after having crossed a small court, entered into a naked hall, where I found my friend Fabricio still at table, with five or six of his companions whom he treated that day.

They had almost dined, and consequently, were in a trim for disputing; but as soon as they perceived me, their noisy discourse subsided into profound silence. Nunnez got up with great eagerness to receive me, crying; "Gentlemen, this is Signior de Sanfillane, who is so good as to honour me with a visit; pray join me, in paying your respects to the favourite of the prime minister." At these words, all the

guests got up also to salute me ; and in favour of the title which I had received, treated me with great civility and respect. Although I was neither hungry nor thirsty, I could not excuse myself from sitting down at table with them ; and was even obliged to honour the toast which they had proposed.

As I imagined that my presence was a check upon their conversation : “ Gentlemen, said I, I have interrupted your discourse : pray resume it, or I will be gone.” “ These gentlemen (said Fabricio) were talking of the *Iphigenia de Euripides*. The batchelor Melchior de Villegas, who is a critic of the first order, was asking of Signior Don Jacinto de Rome-rata, what was the most interesting circumstance of that tragedy ?” “ Yes (said Don Jacinto), and I answered, that it was the danger of Iphigenia.” “ And I (said the batchelor) replied (and I am ready to demonstrate my assertion) that the danger is not the most interesting part of the subject.” “ What is then ? (cried the old licentiate Gabriel de Leon).” ‘Tis the wind (said the batchelor).

The whole company burst out into laughter at this repartee, which I could not believe serious : I thought that Melchior pronounced it, with a view of enlivening the conversation : but I did not know this virtuoso, who was a man that did not at all understand raillery. “ Laugh as much as you please, gentlemen (replied he drily) ; I maintain, that the wind alone ought to interest, surprize and move the spectator : figure to yourselves a numerous army assembled to go and besiege Troy : conceive all the impatience of the chiefs and soldiers to execute that enterprize, that they may speedily return into Greece, where they have left what is most dear to them, their wives, children, and household gods : in the mean time, a cursed contrary wind detains them at Aulis, seems to nail them to the port, and if it does change, they cannot go and besiege the city of Priam ; it is the wind,

wind, therefore, which constitutes the most interesting point of that tragedy. I share with the Greeks, I espouse their cause, my whole wish is the departure of the fleet, and I see with indifference the danger of Iphigenia, since her death is the only means of obtaining a favourable wind from the gods."

Villegas had no sooner done speaking, than the laugh was renewed at his expence. Nunnez was so mischievous as to support his opinion, that he might afford more game to the ralliers, who began to pass a great many jokes upon the wind: but the bachelor beholding them all, with a phlegmatic haughty look treated them as ignorant and vulgar minds. I expected every moment to see them warm, and to go to loggerheads; the usual end of their dissertations; but I was baulked in my expectation: they were contented with reviling one another, and withdrew when they had eaten and drank their fill.

When they were gone, I asked Fabricio, why he did not live still with his treasurer: and if he had quarrelled with him? "Quarrel! (answered he) God forbid: I am more in favour than ever with Signior Don Bertrand, who has allowed me to lodge by myself. I have, therefore, hired these lodgings, to receive my friends, and make merry with them in full liberty: which is often the case: for thou knowest that I am not of an humour to leave much wealth to my heirs; and what is very happy for me, I am, at present, in a condition of enjoying parties of pleasure every day." "I am overjoyed to hear it, my dear Nunnez (said I), and I cannot help congratulating thee again upon the success of thy last tragedy: the whole eight hundred dramatic pieces of the great Lope, have not brought him one fourth of what thou hast got by thy Count de Saldagne.

B O O K XII.

C H A P. I.

Don Blas is sent to Toledo by the minister : the motive and success of his journey.

DURING a whole month almost, his grace had been saying to me every day, " Santillane, the time draws near when I shall set thy address to work ;" and still this time did not come. At length, however, it arrived ; and his excellency spoke to me in these words : " It is reported, that in the company of players belonging to Toledo, there is a young actress whose talents make a great noise : it is said that she dances and sings divinely ; and quite captivates the spectator by her declamation. I am assured also that she has a considerable share of beauty. Such a genius deserves to appear at court. The king loves plays, music and dancing ; and he must not be deprived of the pleasure of seeing and hearing a person of such extraordinary merit. I have resolved, therefore, to send thee to Toledo, to judge by thyself, whether or not she is actually such a wonderful actress. I will be governed by the impression she shall make upon thee, as I depend a great deal on thy discernment." I answered, that I should give his grace a good account of that affair ; and then prepared for my departure with one lacquey only, whom I ordered to put off the minister's livery, that things might be done the more mysteriously. And this was very much to his excellency's taste. I set out then for Toledo, where, when I arrived, I alighted at an inn near the castle. Scarce had I set my foot to the ground, when the landlord, taking me, doubtless, for some country gentleman, said to me " Signior Cavalier,

valier, I suppose you are come to town, to see the august ceremony of the *Auto da Fe*, which is to be performed to-morrow." I answered in the affirmative, thinking it more prudent to let him believe that, than to give him an opportunity of questioning me about my coming to Toledo. "You will see (he resumed) one of the finest processions that ever happened: there are (I am told) more than a hundred prisoners, among which, they reckon above ten who are to be burnt."

Next morning, indeed, before sun rise, I heard all the bells of the city tolling; and this melancholy sound was to advertise the people, that they were going to begin the *Auto da Fe* *. Curious to see this solemnity, I put on my cloaths in a hurry, and repaired to the inquisition. All along the streets through which the procession was to pass, scaffolds were erected, upon one of which I hired a place. In a little time I perceived the Dominican, who walked foremost, preceded by the banners of the inquisition. These good fathers were immediately followed by the wretched victims which were to be sacrificed that day by the holy office. These miserable creatures walked one after another, with their heads and feet bare, each having a wax-taper in his hand, and a godfather † by his side. Some had large scapularies of yellow stuff, garnished with St. Andrew's crosses painted red, and called *Sanbenito*; others wore *Carochas*, which are high paper-caps made in the shape of a sugar-loaf, and covered with flames and diabolical figures,

As I looked attentively at these unfortunate people; with a compassion which I took care to conceal, that

* The Act of Faith.

† People named by the Inquisitor, to accompany the prisoners in the *Auto da Fe*, are obliged to be answerable for them.

I might

I might not suffer for it, I thought that I recollected, among those who had their heads adorned with *Carochas*, the reverend father Hilary, and his companion brother Ambrose. They passed so near me, that I could not be mistaken. "What do I see! (said I to myself) heaven, wearied with the disorderly lives of these wretches, hath delivered them at last to the justice of the inquisition!" So saying, I felt myself seized with horror: I trembled from head to foot, and my spirits were so disordered, that I had almost swooned. The connection which I once had with these rogues, the adventure of Xeva, in short, all the circumstances of my correspondence with them, presented themselves that moment to my fancy; and I thought I could never be thankful enough to God, for having preserved me from the scapulary and *Carochas*.

When the ceremony was ended, I returned to the inn, trembling at the dreadful spectacle which I had beheld: but these afflicting images, which disturbed my imaginations, dispersed insensibly: and now my whole study was to acquit myself handsomely of the commission entrusted to my care. I waited impatiently for play-time, that I might go to the theatre, judging that to be the most proper beginning of my work: and as soon as the hour came, went thither, and sat down by a knight of Alcantara; with whom entering into conversation, "Signior, said I to him, may a stranger be so bold as to ask you one question?" "Signior Cavalier, answered he, very politely, I shall think it an honour." "I have heard the actors of Toledo (I resumed) very much extolled: pray, have I been misinformed?" "No, (replied the knight) their company is not bad; nay, there are great players among them. You will see, among others, the fair Lucretia, an actress of fourteen years of age, who will surprize you very much. I shall have no occasion to point her out to you; when she appears, you will easily distinguish her from the rest."

rest." I asked if she was to play that evening; and he told me she would; observing at the same time, that she had a very shining part to act in the piece which was going to be represented.

The play began; and two actresses, who had neglected nothing which could contribute towards rendering them charming, appeared on the stage; but, in spite of the lustre of their diamonds, I took neither one nor the other for her whom I expected. At length Lucretia walked forwards from the bottom of the stage; and her appearance was saluted by a long and general clapping of hands. "Ah! there she is (said I to myself;) what a noble air! what grace! what fine eyes! O the divine creature! I was actually very well pleased, or rather, passionately struck with her person. On hearing her recite the first couplet, I found she had nature, fire, an understanding above her age; and I willingly joined my applause to that which she received from the whole audience, during the performance. "Well, said the knight to me, you see how Lucretia is caressed by the public." "I am not at all surpris'd at it, answered I. "You would be less so still, said he, if you had heard her sing. She is a perfect syren. Woe be to those who listen! Her dancing is no less formidable. Her steps, as dangerous as her voice, charm the eye, and force the heart to yield." "If that be the case, cried I, it must be owned, she is a prodigy! What happy mortal has the pleasure of ruining himself for such an amiable creature?"

"She has no declared lover, said he, and even scandal has not as yet involved her in any private intrigue. Nevertheless, added he, this may soon be the case; for Lucretia is under the conduct of her aunt Estella, who is certainly the most expert of all the actresses." At the name of Estella I interrupted the knight with precipitation, to ask if that Estella was an actress of the Toledo company. "She is one of the best of them, said he, she has not acted to-day,

day, and we have suffered by her absence : she usually plays the part of the waiting-woman, which she performs to admiration. Her action is full of spirit ; perhaps too full : but it is an agreeable fault, which ought to be forgiven." The knight told me wonders of this Estella ; and by the picture he drew of her person, I never doubted that it was Laura, that same Laura of whom I have spoke so much in my history, and whom I had left at Grenada.

However, to be more certain still, after the play, I went behind the scenes ; and casting my eyes around, found her in the tyring room, talking to some gentlemen, who, perhaps, regarded her only as the aunt of Lucretia. I advanced to salute Laura ; but whether through whim, or in order to punish me for my precipitate departure from Grenada, she pretended not to know me, and received my civilities so drily, that I was a little disconcerted. Instead of upbraiding her in a laughing humour, for her cold behaviour towards me, I was fool enough to be nettled at it : I even retired hastily, resolving, in my passion, to return next day to Madrid. " To be revenged of Laura, said to myself, her niece shall not have the honour of appearing before the king : for this purpose, I can give to the minister such a description of Lucretia as I please : I have no more to do, but to tell him that she dances with a bad grace, that she has a squeaking voice, and in short, that her charms consist in her youth only. I am sure his excellency, after that, will have no inclination to bring her to court."

Such was the vengeance I meditated against Laura, for her behaviour to me ; but my resentment did not last long : next day, just as I was about to depart, a page entered my chamber, and said, " Here is a letter for Signior de Santillane." " I am the person, my child," answered I, taking the letter, which contained these words : " Forget the manner in which

you

you was received last night in the tyring-room, and be so good as to follow the bearer." I immediately took the page for my conductor, who, when we were near the play-house, introduced me into a very handsome house, where I found Laura at her toilet, in a very genteel apartment.

She got up to embrace me, saying, "Signior Gil Blas, I know that you have no cause to be pleased with the reception you met with, when you came to salute me in our tyring-room: an old friend, like you, had a right to expect more civil treatment: but I must tell you, for my excuse, that I was then in a very bad humour. When you appeared, I was quite engrossed by some scandalous discourse which one of our gentlemen had uttered against my niece, whose honour is dearer to me than my own. Your sudden retreat, added she, made me immediately recollect myself; and that moment I ordered my page to follow you to your lodging, that I might to-day make amends for my fault." "That is all already done, my dear Laura, said I: let us talk no more of that matter: let us rather inform one another of what has happened to us, since the unlucky day on which the dread of just chastisement made me quit Grenada with great precipitation. I left you, you may remember, in a pretty great perplexity: pray, how did you extricate yourself? Had you not occasion for all your address, to appease your Portuguese lover?" "Not at all, replied Laura: don't you know, that in such cases the men are so weak, that they sometimes even spare the women the trouble to justify themselves. I affirmed, continued she, to the marquis of Marialva, that thou wast my brother. Pardon me, Santillane, if I speak to you as familiarly as heretofore: but I can't get rid of my old habits. I tell thee then, that I brazened it out. "Don't you see, (said I to the Portuguese nobleman) that all this is the work of jealousy and rage? Narcissa, my comrade

comrade and rival, incensed to see me in quiet possession of a heart of which she was baulked, has played me this trick : she has bribed the under candle-snuffer, who, as the minister of her resentment, has the impudence to say, that he has seen me Arsenia's chambermaid. Nothing can be more false : the widow of Don Antonio Coello always entertained too noble sentiments to humble herself so low as to serve an actress. Besides, what proves the falsity of the accusation, and the conspiracy of my accusers, is the precipitate retreat of my brother : if he was present, he might confound their slander : but Narcissa has, doubtless, employed some new artifice to make him disappear. Though these reasons, pursued Laura, made but an indifferent apology, the marquis was so good as to be satisfied with it : and that good-natured nobleman continued to love me, until the day of his departure from Grenada, on his return to Portugal. Indeed, he did not stay long after thee : and the wife of Zapata had the pleasure of seeing me lose the lover of whom I had deprived her. After that, I lived some years at Grenada : then a division happening in our company, which is often the case, all the players separated : some went to Seville, others to Cordova ; and I came to Toledo, where I have been ten years, with my niece Lucretia, whom thou must have seen act last night, since thou was at the play."

I could not help laughing in this place ; and Laura, asking the cause, " Can't you guess ? (said I) you have neither brother nor sister, and of consequence cannot be Lucretia's aunt. Besides, when I calculate the time which hath elapsed, since our last separation, and compare it with the age of your niece, I cannot help thinking that you are more nearly related."

" I understand you, Mr. Gil Bias, (replied Don Antonio's widow, reddening) what a chronologist you

you are ! it is impossible to make you believe it. Well, then, my friend, Lucretia is my daughter by the marquis of Marialva ; she is the fruit of our correspondence ; I can no longer conceal it from thee."

"What a great effort you make, my princefs, (said I) in revealing that secret, after having imparted to me your adventures with the steward of the hospital of Zamora. I must tell you, moreover, Lucretia is a maid of such singular merit, that the public can never be thankful enough to you, for having made such a present to it. It were to be wished that all your comrades had done the same." If some mischievous reader, in this place, recollecting the private conversations which I had with Laura at Grenada, while I was secretary to the marquis of Marialva, suspects that I might have disputed with that nobleman the honour of being Lucretia's father, it is a suspicion, the injustice of which I must avow to my shame. I recounted my principal adventures to Laura in my turn, and made her acquainted with my present situation. She listened to my narration so attentively, as to shew that it was far from being indifferent to her : and when I had finished it, "Friend Santillane, (said she) I find you act a very considerable part on the theatre of the world ; and you cannot imagine how much I am overjoyed at your good fortune. When I shall bring Lucretia to Madrid, with an intention to introduce her into the prince's company, I flatter myself that she will find a powerful protector in Signior de Santillane."

"Never doubt that (answered I) you may depend upon me : I will procure your daughter's admittance into the prince's company, whenever you please : this is what I can promise, without presuming too much upon my power." "I would take you at your word, (replied Laura) and set out for Madrid to-morrow, were I not restricted to this place by engagements with our company." "An order from court

court can break these ties, (said I) and you shall receive one in less than eight days. I shall be pleased in taking Lucretia from the Toledans: such an handsome actress is destined for courtiers, and properly belongs to us."

Lucretia entered the room just as I had pronounced these words; and seemed so pretty, and engaging that I took her for the goddess Hebe. She had just risen; and her natural beauty shining without the help of art, presented a ravishing object to my view. "Come, niece, (said her mother to her) come and thank this gentleman for his friendship: he is an old acquaintance of mine, who has great interest at court, and intends to introduce us both into the prince's company. These words seemed to give pleasure to the dear girl, who made me a low courtesy; and said, with an enchanting smile, "I most humbly thank you for your obliging intention; but in taking me from the people by whom I am beloved, are you sure that I shall please the audience at Madrid? I shall perhaps lose by the change. I remember to have heard my aunt say, that she has seen actors caressed in one place, and hissed in another; and this gives me some concern: beware of exposing me to the contempt, and yourself to the reproaches of the court." "Fair Lucretia, (answered I) neither you nor I have reason to be apprehensive of that: I rather fear, that by inflaming all that behold you, you will create some misunderstanding among our grandees." "The fear of my niece (said Laura) is better founded than yours: but I hope they are both vain; if Lucretia cannot make a noise by her charms, in recompence, she is no contemptible actress."

Our conversation lasted some time longer; and I had reason to conclude, from every thing which Lucretia said, that she was a maid of a superior genius. I then took my leave of the two ladies, assuring them that they should soon have an order from court to repair to Madrid.

C H A P. II.

Santillane gives an account of his commission to the minister, who employs him to bring Lucretia to Madrid. The arrival of that actress, and her appearance at court.

AT my return to Madrid, I found the count-
duke very impatient to know the success of my
journey. "Gil Blas, (said he) hast thou seen this
same actress? Is she worth bringing to court?" "My
lord (I replied) same, which usually praises beauties
more than they deserve, has not said enough in com-
mendation of young Lucretia; she is an admirable
creature both as to her person and talents." "Is it
possible! (cried the minister, with an interior satisfac-
tion which I read in his eyes, and which made me
believe that he had sent me to Toledo on his own ac-
count) is it possible that she can be so amiable?"
"When you have seen her, (answered I) you will
own, that no eulogium can do justice to her charms."
"Santillane, (said his excellency) give me a faithful
relation of thy journey; I shall be very glad to hear
it." To satisfy my master, I then recounted all,
even the history of Laura inclusively. I told him,
that this actress had Lucretia by the Marquis of Ma-
rialva, a Portuguese nobleman, who stopping at Gre-
nada on his travels, fell in love with her. In short,
when I had recounted to his grace every thing that
happened between the two actresses and me, he said,
"I am overjoyed to hear that Lucretia is the daughter
of a man of quality; that circumstance interests me
still more in her behalf; she must be brought to town.
But (added he) continue as thou hast begun; let not
me appear in it; every thing must pass in the name
of Gil Blas de Santillane."

I went

I went and told Carnero, that his Excellency desired him to expedite an order, by which the king received into his company Estella and Lucretia, two actresses of Toledo. "Aha! Signior de Santillana, (said Carnero, with a satirical smile) yes, you shall be served immediately, since, in all appearance, you interest yourself for these two ladies." At the same time, he wrote an order with his own hand, and delivered it to me expedited; so that I sent it instantly to Estella by the same lacquey who had attended me to Toledo. Eight days after, the mother and daughter arriving at Madrid, took lodgings hard by the prince's company; and their first care was to give me notice of it by a billet. I visited them immediately, where, after a thousand offers of service on my side, and as many acknowledgements on theirs, I left them to prepare for their first public appearance, which I wished might be brilliant and successful.

They advertised themselves as two new actresses, whom the prince's company had received by an order from court; and they began with a comedy which they had often acted at Toledo with applause. In what part of the world are new sights disregarded? The playhouse was that day filled with an extraordinary concourse of spectators; and you may well imagine that I did not fail to be there. I suffered a little before the piece began; and prepossessed as I was in favour of the talents both of mother and daughter, I trembled for them, so much was I interelled in their success. But scarce had they opened their mouths, when my fear was banished by the applause which they received. Estella was looked upon as a consummate comic actress, and Lucretia as a prodigy in tender parts. This last captivated all hearts. Some admired the beauty of her eyes, others were touched by the sweetnest of her voice; and every body struck with the graces and brilliancy of her youth, went away enchanted by her appearance.

The

The count-duke being more interested than I imagined in the first essay of this actress, was at the play that evening; and I saw him go out about the end of the performance, seemingly very well satisfied with our two new players. Curious to know if he was really affected with their success, I followed him home, and going into his closet just after him, "Well, my lord, (said I) is your excellency satisfied with young Marialva." "My excellency (answered he smiling) would be very nice indeed, if I refused to join my vote to that of the public. Yes, child, I am charmed with thy Lucretia, and I don't doubt that the king will be pleased when he sees her."

C H A P. III.

Lucretia makes a great noise at court, and acts before the king, who falls in love with her. The consequences of his passion.

THE appearance of two new actresses soon made a noise at court; the very next day it was spoke of at the king's levee. Some noblemen extolled young Lucretia in particular, and drew such a beautiful picture of her, that the monarch was struck with it: but dissembling the impression which their discourses made upon his heart, he seemed to take no notice of what they said. Nevertheless, as soon as he found himself alone with the count-duke, he asked who this actress was whom they praised so much? The minister answered, that she was a young player of Toledo, who had made her first appearance the preceding night with great success. She is called Lucretia, (added he) a name very suitable to people of her profession. She is an acquaintance of Santilane's, who spoke so much in her favour, that I thought proper to receive her into your majesty's company."

The

The king smiled when he heard my name mentioned, because he remembered perhaps at that moment, that it was I who had made him acquainted with Catalina, and foresaw that I should do him the same service on this occasion. "Count, (said he to the minister) I will go to-morrow, and see this Lucretia act. Take care to advertise her of my intention."

The count-duke having repeated this conversation to me, and informed me of the king's design, sent me to impart it to our two actresses. "I come (said I to Laura, who was the first I met) to tell you a piece of great news; you will to-morrow have among your spectators the sovereign of this monarchy; this is what I am ordered by the minister to acquaint you with. I don't doubt that your daughter and you will do your utmost to deserve the honour which the king intends you; but I advise you to chuse a piece in which there is both dancing and music, that he may admire all the talents of Lucretia together." "We will take your advice, (replied Laura) and do all in our power to amuse the prince." "He cannot fail of being pleased, (said I, seeing Lucretia come in, in a dishabille, which gave her more charms than the most superb theatrical dress.) He will be so much the more satisfied with your lovely niece, as he loves singing and dancing above all other entertainments; who knows but he may be tempted to throw the handkerchief at her?" "I don't at all wish (replied Laura) that he may have any such temptation; notwithstanding his being a powerful monarch, he might find obstacles to the accomplishment of his desires. Lucretia is virtuous, though bred behind the scenes! and whatever pleasure she may feel in seeing herself applauded on the stage, she would much rather pass for a modest girl than a good actress."

"Why should my aunt (said young Marialva, joining in the conversation) form such chimeras to fight with? I shall never be obliged to repulse the
sighs

sighs of the king; the delicacy of his taste will save him from the reproaches he would deserve, if he could humble his attention to me." "But, charming Lucretia, (said I) should it happen that the prince would attach himself to you, and chuse you for his mistress, would you be so cruel as to let him languish in your chains, like an ordinary lover?" "Why not? (answered she.) Yes, doubtless: and though virtue were out of the question, my vanity would exult much more in resisting, than in yielding to his passion." I was not a little astonished to hear a pupil of Laura talk in this manner; and left the ladies, praising the last, for having bestowed such good education on the other.

Next day, the king, impatient to see Lucretia, went to the play. They acted a performance mixed with songs and dances, in which our young actress shone very much. From the beginning to the end, I kept my eyes fixed on the monarch, and in his looks endeavoured to read his thoughts, but he baffled my penetration by an air of gravity which all along he affected to preserve. I did not learn till next day what I was so curious to know. "Santillane, (said the minister to me) I have just left the king, who has spoke to me of Lucretia with so much vivacity, that I am convinced he is captivated by that young player; and as I told him that thou wast the occasion of bringing her from Toledo, he said he should be glad to talk with thee in private on that subject. Go instantly and present thyself at his chamber door, where there is an order already given to admit thee. Run therefore, and bring me back, as soon as possible, an account of the conversation."

I flew instantly to the palace, where I found the king alone, walking very fast in expectation of my coming, and seemingly very much perplexed. He put several questions to me about Lucretia, whose history he obliged me to recount; he then asked if

the little gentlewoman had never been engaged in any intrigue? I boldly assured him that she had not, (tho' these sorts of assurances are a little rash) and the prince seemed very glad to hear it. "If that be the case, (said he) I chuse thee for my agent with Lucretia; and desire, that by thy means she may this evening learn her victory. Go, signify her conquest from me, (added he, putting into my hand a diamond necklace worth fifty thousand crowns) and tell her that I desire she will accept of that present, until I give her more solid marks of my affection."

Before I performed this commission, I went back to the count-duke, and made a faithful report of what the king had said; with this I imagined the minister would be more afflicted than rejoiced; for I believed (as I have already observed) that he himself had amorous views upon Lucretia, and would be chagrined to hear that his master was become his rival; but I was mistaken. Far from seeming mortified at the news, it gave him so much joy, that, being unable to contain it, some words escaped him, which did not fall to the ground, "Aha, Philip, (cried he) egad I have you fast. For once you will be sick of business." This apostrophe disclosed the whole contrivance of the count-duke. I now perceived, that the minister being afraid of the king's applying himself to serious affairs, endeavoured to amuse him with pleasures more suitable to his humour. "Santillane, said he afterwards, lose no time; make haste, my friend, to go and execute the important order which thou hast received, and which a great many noblemen at court would glory in performing. Consider (said he) that thou hast here no count de Lemos, to deprive thee of one half of the honour acquired in this service. Thou wilt have it intirely to thyself, and more over enjoy all the fruits of it."

Thus did his excellency gild the pill, which I swallowed down gently, though not without tasting the bitterness

bitterness of it : for, since my imprisonment, I had been used to look upon things in a moral point of view, and did not think the post of Mercury in chief quite so honourable as it was called. However, though I was not vicious enough to perform it without remorse, I had not virtue sufficient to make me refuse the employment. I therefore obeyed the king the more willingly, as I saw at the same time that my compliance would be agreeable to the minister, whom it was my sole study to please. I thought proper to address myself at first to Laura, to whom, in a private conversation, I disclosed my mission in a discreet manner ; and, towards the end of the discourse, presented the jewels ; at sight of which, the lady being unable to conceal her joy, gave a loose to it. “ Signior Gil Blas, (cried he) I ought not to constrain myself before my oldest and best friend. I should be to blame, in affecting a false severity of morals, and making grimaces with you. Yes, you need not doubt it, (continued she) I am overjoyed that my daughter has made such a precious conquest, all the advantages of which I comprehend : but, between you and me, I am afraid that Lucretia will look upon them with a different eye ; for, though a young actress, she is so careful of her chastity, that she has already rejected the addresses of two young noblemen both amiable and rich. You may say indeed, that these were not kings. True ; and in all probability, the passion of a crowned head will shake the virtue of Lucretia. Nevertheless, I must tell you, that the thing is uncertain ; and I declare that I will never force the inclinations of my daughter. If, far from thinking herself honoured by the transient affection of the king, she shall regard that honour as infamous, let not that great prince be obliged, if she shall conceal herself from him. Return to-morrow, added she, and then I will tell you, whether you must carry back to him a favourable answer for his jewels.

B^a

I did

I did not at all doubt, that Laura would exhort Lucretia to swerve from her duty, rather than remain in it, and I depended a good deal on that exhortation. Nevertheless, I learned with surprize next day, that Laura had as much difficulty in swaying her daughter to vice, as other mothers have to form theirs to virtue; and which is still more surprizing, Lucretia, after having granted some private interviews to the monarch, felt so much remorse for having yielded to his desires, that she quitted the world all of a sudden, and shut herself up in the monastery of the Incarnation, where she soon fell sick, and died of grief. Laura being inconsolable for the loss of her daughter, whose death she upbraided herself with, retired into the convent of the female penitents, there to mourn the pleasures of her youth. The king was affected by the unexpected retreat of Lucretia; but being of a humour not to be long afflicted at any thing, consoled himself by degrees for this event. As for the count duke, although he did not seem very much touched at this incident, it did not fail to give him a great deal of mortification; and this the reader will easily believe,

C H A P. IV.

Santillane is invested by the minister with a new employment.

I WAS also sensibly affected by the misfortune of Lucretia, and felt such remorse for having contributed to it, that looking upon myself as an infamous wretch, in spite of the quality of the lover whose passion I had served, I resolved to abandon the Caduceus for ever. I even expressed to the minister the reluctance I had to bear it, and begged he would employ me in something else. "Santillane, said he, I am charmed

charmed by thy delicacy ; and since thou art a man of such honour, will give thee an occupation more suitable to thy virtue. This it is ; listen attentively to what I am going to impart."

" Some years before I was in favour, continued he, chance one day presented to my view a lady so handsome and well made, that I ordered her to be followed. I learned that she was a Genoese, called Donna Margarita Spinola, who lived at Madrid on the revenue of her beauty, and that Don Francisco de Valeasar *, an alcade of the court, a rich old married man, spent a great deal of money upon the coquette. This report, which ought to have inspired me with contempt for her, made me conceive a violent desire of sharing her favours with Valeasar ; and to satisfy it, I had recourse to a female go-between, who had the address in a little time to procure for me a private interview with the Genoese ; and that was followed by many more, so that my rival and I were equally well treated for our presents. Perhaps too, she had other gallants as happy as we were.

Be that as it will, Margarita, in receiving such confused homage, insensibly became pregnant, and brought forth a son, the honour of whom she bestowed on each of her lovers in particular ; but not one of them being in conscience able to boast himself the father of that child, it was disowned by them all ; so that the Genoese was obliged to maintain it with the fruit of her intrigues : this she did for eighteen years, at the end of which term dying, she has left her son

* Don Francisco Valeasar actually married this lady when she was big with child, and adopted the boy, whom he educated and acknowledged as his own son, during the space of thirty one years ; at the expiration of which the count-duce finding himself without heirs male, had him legitimated and created marquis of Mayzena.

without fortune, and, which is worse, without education.

This (pursued his grace) is the secret I had to impart, and I will now inform thee of the great design which I have projected. I will bring this unfortunate child from obscurity, and making him pass from one extreme to the other, raise him to honours, and own him for my son."

At this extravagant project, it was impossible for me to hold my tongue. "How! my lord, (cried I) can your excellency have taken such a strange resolution? pardon me for using that term which escaped my zeal." "Thou wilt find it is very prudent, (he replied with precipitation) when I have told thee the reasons that have determined me to take it. I don't desire that my collaterals should be my heirs. Thou wilt say, that I am not as yet of such an advanced age, as to make me despair of having children by my lady Olivarez. But every one knows himself best. Let it suffice to tell thee, that there is no secret in chemistry which I have not tried in vain to become a father. Therefore, since fortune supplying the defect of nature, presents a child to me, whose true father perhaps I am, I am resolved to adopt him." When I saw the minister bent on this adoption, I ceased to oppose it, knowing him to be a man capable of committing a foolish action, rather than swerve from his own opinion. "The sole business now (added he) is to bestow education upon Don Henry Philip de Guzman, (for this name I intend he shall bear) until he shall be in a condition to possess the dignities that await him. Thou, my dear Santillane, art the person whom I chuse to be his tutor. I confide in thy understanding and attachment to me, for thy care in regulating his family, in giving him all sorts of masters: in a word, of making him an accomplished cavalier." I would have refused this employment, representing to the count-duke that I was very ill qualified

fied to educate young noblemen, having never practised that business, which required more knowledge and merit than I possessed. But he interrupted me, and shut my mouth, by saying, "that he was absolutely resolved to make me governor to this adopted son, whom he destined for the first offices of the monarchy." I prepared myself therefore to fill this place, for the satisfaction of his grace, who, to reward my compliance, increased my small revenue with a pension of a thousand crowns, which he procured, or rather gave me, on the commandery of Mamdra.

C H A P. V.

The son of the Genoese lady is owned by an authentic act, and called Don Henry Philip de Guzman. Santillane forms the family of that young gentleman, and hires all sorts of masters for him.

THE count-duke in a little time actually owned the son of Donna Margarita Spinola, and the deed was executed with the consent and inclination of the king. Don Henry Philip de Guzman (for that was the name given to this child of many fathers) was declared sole heir of the count d'Olivarez, and of the dutchy of San Lucar. The minister, that no body might be ignorant of this event, ordered Carnero to communicate the declaration to the ambassadors and grandes of Spain, who were not a little surprized at his conduct. The wits of Madrid had a fund of mirth from it a long time, and the satirical poets did not neglect such a fair occasion of shedding the gall of their pens.

When I asked where this gentleman was whom his grace intended to entrust to my care ; “ He is in this city, (he replied) under the direction of an aunt, from whom I will take him, as soon as thou shalt have prepared a house for him.” This was soon performed. I took a house, which I caused to be magnificently furnished ; hired pages, a porter and footmen ; and with the assistance of Caporis, filled up the places of his officers. When I had compleated his attendance, I went and advertised his excellency, who immediately sent for his equivocal heir and new shoot from the trunk of the Guzmans ; and I found him a tall young fellow of an agreeable person. “ Don Henry, (said his grace to him, pointing with his finger to me) this gentleman is the guide whom I have chosen to conduct you in the career of life. I have the greatest confidence in him, and give him an absolute power over you. Yes, Santillane, (said he, turning to me) I abandon him entirely to your care, and don’t doubt that you will give a good account of him.” To this discourse the minister joined others, exhorting the young man to submit to my directions ; after which I conducted Don Henry to his house, where, when we arrived, I made all his domestics pass in review before him, signifying the office of each. He did not seem confounded at the change of his condition : and accommodating himself to the deference and officious respect that was shewn to him, he seemed to have been always that which he was now become by chance. He did not want capacity, but was wholly illiterate, being scarce able to read or write. I furnished him with a preceptor to teach him the elements of the Latin tongue, and hired for him masters of geography, history and fencing. You may well believe that I did not forget a dancing-master : I was only embarrassed in the choice, for at that time there was a great number famous in that profession at Madrid, and I did

did not know to whom I ought to give the preference. While I was in this perplexity, a man richly dressed came into the court, and I being told that he wanted to speak with me, went to him, imagining that he was at least a knight of St. Jago or Alcantara. When I asked his commands, "Signior de Santillane, (answered he, after having made several bows, which smelled strongly of his profession) understanding that your worship is the person who chuses masters for Signior Don Henry, I am come to offer my service; my name is Martin Ligeró, and I have (thank heaven) some reputation. It is not my custom to come and solicit for scholars; that is the province of little obscure dancing-masters. I usually wait until I am sent for; but as I have taught the Duke de Medina Sidonia, Don Lewis de Haro, and some other noblemen of the family of Guzman, to which I am as it were a servant born, I thought it my duty to anticipate your message." "I find by your discourse (said I) that you are the man we want. How much do you take per month?" "Four double pistoles (answered he) is the current price, and I give but two lessons per week," "Four doubloons a month! (cried I) that's a great deal." "How! a great deal! (replied he with an air of astonishment) you would give a pistole a month to a master of philosophy."

There was no resisting such a pleasant reply, at which I laughed heartily, and asked Signior Ligeró, if he really thought a man of his profession preferable to a master of philosophy? "Doubtless! (said he) we are of much greater use than those gentlemen. What is a man before he passes through our hands? what but an ill-licked cub? but our lessons mould him by little and little into a due form. In a word, we teach him to move gracefully, giving him attitudes and airs of dignity and importance."

I yielded to the arguments of this dancing-master, whom I hired for Don Henry, at the rate of four double pistoles a month, since that was the price of great masters of his art.

CHAP. VI.

Scipio returning from New-Spain, Gil Blas settles him in the service of Don Henry. The studies of that young nobleman, with the honours which were conferred upon him, and an account of the lady to whom he was married. Gil Blas becomes noble in spite of himself.

I HAD not as yet compleated the half of Don Henry's family, when Scipio returned from Mexico. I asked him if he was satisfied with his voyage, and he answered, "I have reason to be so; since, with three thousand ducats in specie, I have brought over twice as much in merchandize of the consumption of this country." "I congratulate thee, my child, (I replied.) Thy fortune is now begun; and it is in thy power to compleat it, by returning to the Indies next year; or if thou preferrest an agreeable post at Madrid, to the trouble of going so far to amass wealth, thou hast nothing to do but to speak, I have one at thy service." "Egad, (said the son of Coscolina) there is no room for hesitation. I would much rather execute a good employment near you, than expose myself anew to the perils of a long voyage. Pray, master, explain yourself, what post do you intend for your humble servant?"

For his better information, I recounted to him the story

story of the young nobleman whom the count-duce had introduced into the family of Guzman; and after having told him that the minister had chosen me governor to Don Henry, I promised to make him valet de chambre to that adopted son. Scipio, who asked no better, willingly accepted the post, and acquitted himself in it so well, that in less than three or four days, he acquired the confidence and friendship of his new master.

I imagined that the pedagogues whom I had chosen to teach the son of the Genoese would find their Latin thrown away, believing one at his age undisciplinable. But I was much mistaken. He easily comprehended and retained all that was shewn to him, and his masters were very well satisfied with his capacity. I ran eagerly to impart this piece of news to the duke, who received it with excessive joy. "Santillane, cried he transported, I am ravished to hear that Don Henry has such a memory and penetration! I perceive my own blood in him; and what convinces me of his being my son is, that I feel as much affection for him as if he had been born by my lady Olivarez. Thou seest by this, my friend, that nature declares itself." I was not fool enough to tell his grace my sentiments of the matter, but respecting his weakness, left him to enjoy the pleasure (whether true or false) of believing himself the father of Don Henry.

Although all the Guzmans entertained a mortal hatred for this young nobleman of fresh date, they dissembled it out of policy; nay, some of them affected to court his friendship; he was visited by the ambassadors and grandees who were then at Madrid, and honoured by them as much as if he had been a legitimate son of the count-duce. This minister, overjoyed to see such incense offered to his idol, soon decked him with dignities. He began by asking of the king the cross of Alcantara, with a commandery

worth ten thousand crowns, for Don Henry. In a little time after, he was made gentleman of the bed-chamber. Then resolving to marry him to a lady of the most noble family of Spain, he cast his eyes upon Donna Juana Velasco, daughter to the duke of Castile, and had authority enough to accomplish the marriage, in spite of that duke and all his relations.

A few days before the marriage, his grace having sent for me, put some papers into my hand, saying, "Hold, Gil Blas, here are letters of nobility, which I have ordered to be expedited for thee." "My lord, (answered I, surprized at his words) your excellency knows that I am the son of a poor duenna and squire; so that, in my opinion, the nobility would be profaned by my association; and it is, of all the favours which his majesty could bestow, that which I deserve and desire the least." "Thy birth (replied the minister) is an objection that is easily removed: thou hast been employed in state-affairs, both under the duke of Lerma's ministry and mine: besides, added he with a smile, hast thou not done the monarch some service, which deserves a recompence? In a word, Santillane, thou art not unworthy of the honour which I have procured for thee. Moreover, the rank which thou holdest with regard to my son, requires that thou shouldest be noble; and it is on that account that I have obtained the patent." "I yield, my lord, I replied, since your excellency insists upon my compliance." So saying, I went away with my patent in my pocket.

I am now a gentleman (said I to myself, when I had got into the street) ennobled without being obliged to my parents for my quality. I may, when I please, be called Don Gil Blas, and if any one of my acquaintance shall take it into his head to laugh in my face when he calls me so, I will shew my patent. But let us read it, (continued I, taking it out of my pocket) and see in what manner my original

meaneth

meanness is washed away." I therefore perused the paper, the substance of which was, that the king, to reward the zeal which I had manifested on more than one occasion for his service and the good of the state, had thought proper to gratify my attachment with letters of nobility. I will venture to say in my own praise, that they did not inspire me with the least pride. Having the meanness of my extraction always before my eyes, this honour humbled instead of making me vain; therefore I determined to lock up my patent in a drawer, and never boast its being a my possession.

CHAP.

C H A P. VII.

Gil Blas meets Fabricio again by accident. The last conversation that happened between them, and the important advice which Nunnez gave to Santillane.

THE Asturian poet (as must have been observed by the reader) willingly neglected me, and my occupations did not permit me to visit him. I had not seen him since the day of the dissertation on the Iphigenia of Euripides, when chance again threw him in my way near the gate of the sun. He was coming out of a printing-house, and I accosted him, saying, "Aha! Mr. Nunnez, you have been at the printer's; that seems to threaten the public with a new work of your composition." "That is what indeed it may expect, (answered he.) I have actually in the press a pamphlet which will make some noise in the republic of letters." "I don't doubt the merit of thy production, (I replied) but am amazed at thy composing pamphlets, which in my opinion are trifles that do no great honour to a man of genius." "I know it very well, said Fabricio, and am not ignorant that none but those who read every thing, amuse themselves with pamphlets. However, this one has escaped me, which I own is the child of necessity. Hunger, thou knowest, brings the wolf out of the wood."

"How! (cried I) does the author of the Count de Saldagne talk in this manner? a man who has two thousand crowns a year?" Softly, friend, (said Nunnez

Numéz to me) I am no longer that happy poet who enjoyed a well paid pension. The affairs of the treasurer Don Bertrand are disordered all of a sudden. He has fingered and squandered away the king's money; all his effects are seized, and my pension is gone to the devil." "That is a melancholy affair, I resumed, but hast thou no hope remaining from that quarter?" "Not the least, said he. Signior Gomez de Ribero, as poor as his poet, is gone to the bottom, and will never, it is said, get his head above water again."

"If that be the case, my child, answered I, I must find out some post to console thee for the loss of thy pension. "I will spare thee that trouble, cried he. If thou wouldst offer me an employment in the minister's offices, worth three thousand crowns yearly, I would refuse it. The business of clerks will not agree with the humour of a foster-child of the Muses; I must enjoy my literary amusements. What shall I say to thee? I am born to live and die a poet, and my destiny must be fulfilled."

"But don't imagine, continued he, that we are very unhappy; besides that we live in perfect independence, we are boys without care. People think that we often dine with Democritus, and there they are mistaken. There is not one of my fraternity, not even excepting the makers of almanacks, who is not welcome to some good table. As for my part, there are two families where I am always received with pleasure. I have two covers laid for me every day, one at the house of a fat director of the farms, to whom I have dedicated a romance; and the other, at the house of a rich citizen, who has the disease of being thought to entertain wits every day at his table: luckily he is not very delicate in his choice, and the city furnishes him with great plenty."

"I no longer pity thee, then, said I to the Asturian poet, since thou art satisfied with thy condition; though

though I protest to thee anew, that thou hast always in Gil Blas a friend, who is proof against thy neglect and indifference; if thou hast occasion for my purse, come boldly to me, and let not a silly shame deprive thee of an infallible succour, and rob me of the pleasure of obliging thee."

"By that generous sentiment, cried Nunnez, I recollect my friend Santillane. I return a thousand thanks for thy kind offer, and out of gratitude will give thee a wholesome advice. While the count-duke continues in power, and thou art in possession of his favour, profit by the opportunity, make haste to enrich thyself, for I am told he begins to totter." I asked Fabricio if he had that intelligence on good authority? and he answered, "I have it from a knight of Calatrava, who has a very singular talent in discovering the most hidden secrets; he is looked upon as an oracle, and this is what I heard him say yesterday. The count-duke has a great many enemies, who are all united to ruin him; he depends too much on the ascendancy which he has over the king; that monarch, it is reported, begins to listen to the complaints which have already reached his ears." I thanked Nunnez for his information, of which I took little notice, but went home, persuaded my master's authority was immoveable, and considering him as one of those old oaks which are rooted in a forest, and which no storms can overthrow.

C H A P. VIII.

Gil Blas is convinced of the truth of Fabricio's intelligence. The king goes to Saragossa.

NEvertheless, what the Asturian poet had told me, was not without foundation. There was in the palace a secret confederacy formed against the count-duce, and the queen was said to be at the head of it; but none of the measures which they took to displace the minister, transpired: nay, a whole year passed, before I perceived that his favour had received the least shock.

But the revolt of the Catalonians supported by France, and the bad success of the war against these rebels, excited the murmurs of the people, who complained of the government. These complaints occasioned a council to be held in presence of the king, who desired the Marquis de Grena, the emperor's ambassador at the court of Spain, to be there. The subject of their deliberation being, whether it was most proper for the king to stay in Castile, or go and shew himself to his troops at Arragon? the count-duce, who was averse to the prince's departure for the army, spoke first: he represented that it was better for his majesty to remain in the centre of his dominions; and supported his opinion with all the reasons which his eloquence could afford. He had no sooner concluded his speech, than his advice was unanimously followed by every body in council, except the Marquis of Grena, who listening to nothing but his zeal for the house of Austria, and giving way to

to the frankness of his nation, opposed the sentiment of the prime minister, and supported the contrary opinion with such force, that the king was struck with the solidity of his arguments, embraced his opinion, though it was opposite to that of the whole council, and fixed the day of his departure for the army.

This was the first time that ever his majesty durst think otherwise than his favourite; who, looking upon this novelty as a bloody affront, was very much mortified. When the minister was going to retire into his closet, to bite upon the bridle of liberty, he perceived me, and taking me in along with him, recounted what had passed at council, with great agitation: then, like a man who could not recollect himself from his surprise, "Yes, Santillane, (continued he) the king who for these twenty years past, hath spoke with my mouth, and seen thro' my eyes, now prefers the opinion of Grena to mine; and in what manner too? loading the ambassador with eulogiums, and in particular praising his zeal for the house of Austria, as if that German loved it better than I do.

By this, it is easy to judge (pursued the minister) that there is a party formed against me, and that the queen is at the head of it." "Why, my lord, (said I) should you be uneasy with that conjecture? Has not the queen, for more than twelve years, been used to see you at the helm, and the king been in a long habit of not consulting her? As for the Marquis de Grena, the monarch, perhaps, chose his opinion, out of desire to see his army, and make a campaign." "That is not the case, (said the count-duke) say rather, my enemies hope that the king being among his troops, will always be surrounded by the noblemen who will attend him; and that more than one will be found so much disgusted at me, as to speak to the prejudice of my administration: but they are mistaken, (added he) I will make the prince inaccessible to them all, during

during the journey." This he actually performed, in a manner that deserves to be related.

The day of the king's departure being arrived, that monarch, after having entrusted the queen with the care of the government, in his absence, set out for Saragossa: but in his way, passing by Aranjuez *, was so delighted with the place, that he staid there almost three weeks: from thence the minister carried him to Cuenza, where he amused him still longer, by various diversions. Then the pleasures of the chace detained him at Molina of Arragon; after which, he was conducted to Saragossa.

His army being not far from thence, he prepared for going to it; but the count-duke altered his inclination, by making him believe that he would be in danger of being taken by the French, who were masters of the plain of Moncon: so, that the king being afraid of the peril which he had no cause to fear, took the resolution of remaining shut up at home, as in a prison. The minister taking advantage of his terror, and under pretence of watching for his safety, guarded him, as it were, from the sight of every body: and the grandees who had been at a vast expence, to put themselves in a condition to follow their sovereign, had not even the satisfaction of obtaining one private audience. Philip, at length, tired of being ill lodged at Saragossa, of passing his time still worse,

* Aranjuez, is a royal palace in New Castile, situated near the rivers of Taio and Garama, in a large plain surrounded by hills and forests, thro' which are many spacious avenues. The entrance to this palace is over two painted wooden bridges, upon the fore-said rivers, which join a little below the house. Here is a delightful garden; and in a large square paved with marble, a statue in brass of Charles the Fifth armed capapee, trampling upon Heresy represented by four arch hereticks.

or if you please, of being prisoner, returned in a little time to Madrid. Thus this monarch finished his campaign, leaving to the marquis de los Veles, general of his troops, the care of maintaining the honour of the Spanish arms.

C H A P. IX.

The revolution of Portugal, and the disgrace of the count-duke.

A Few days after the king's return, a very disagreeable piece of news spread all over Madrid. It was reported that the Portugueze, looking upon the revolt of the Catalonians as a fair occasion offered to them by fortune, for shaking off the Spanish yoke, had taken up arms, and chosen the duke of Braganza for their king: that they were resolved to maintain him on the throne, and were confident of success; Spain having at that time on her hands, enemies in Germany, Italy, Flanders and Catalonia: indeed, they could not have found a more favourable conjuncture for freeing themselves from a dominion which they detested *.

* This revolution, which happened in the year 1640, was conducted with such surprizing secrecy, (tho' the design was known to more than 200 persons, a whole year before) that the duke of Brangaza was declared king, and the Spanish yoke shook off in one day, thro' all the Spanish dominions in Europe, Asia, Africa and America.

What

What is very singular, is that the count-duke, while both court and city seemed to be struck with consternation at the news, wanted to joke with the king, at the expence of the duke de Braganza; but Philip far from being pleased with this raillery, assumed a very grave air,, which disconcerted him, and made him foresee his disgrace: he no longer doubted his own fall when he understood, that the queen had openly declared herself against him, and loudly accused him, of having by his bad administration, occasioned the revolt in Portugal. The greatest part of the grandees, especially those who had been at Saragossa, no sooner perceived that a tempest was brewing over the head of the count-duke, than they joined the queen: and what gave the last stroke to his favour, was, the arrival of the Dutchess Dowager of Mantua, formerly governess of Portugal. This lady, on her return from Lisbon to Madrid, plainly demonstrated to the king, that the revolution of that kingdom happened through the fault of the prime minister.

The discourse of this princess made a great impression on the mind of the monarch, who being, at length, roused from his infatuation for his favourite, stript him of all the affection which he had entertained for him. When the minister was informed that the king listened to his enemies, he wrote a letter to him, asking him leave to resign his employment, and remove from court, since people were so unjust as to impute to him all the misfortunes which had happened to the kingdom, during the course of his administration. He thought that this letter would have a great effect, and that the prince still preserved so much friendship for him, as to detain him at court; but all the answer which his majesty returned, was the permission that he desired, with leave to retire whithersoever he would.

These words written by the king's own hand, were a thunder-bolt to his grace, who, by no means, expected

pected such a reply : but, though he was very much confounded, he affected an air of constancy, and asked what I would do, were I in his place. " I would soon take my resolution, said I ; I would abandon the court, and pass the rest of my days in peace, at some one of my estates in the country." " That is a wholesome advice, replied my master, and I am fully resolved to finish my career at Loeches, after I shall have once more conversed with the king : for I want to demonstrate to him, that I have done all that human prudence could suggest, to sustain the weighty burthen with which I was loaded ; and that it was impossible for me to prevent the melancholy events laid at my door ; being no more to blame, than a skillful pilot, who, in spite of all he can do, sees his vessel tossed about by the waves and winds." The minister still flattered himself, that by speaking to the prince, he might adjust matters, and regain the ground which he had lost ; but he never could procure an audience, and besides, one was sent to demand the key of the door, by which he used to enter, when he pleased, into his majesty's apartment. Concluding then, that there were no farther hopes for him, he determined, in good earnest, to retire. He examined his papers, a great quantity of which he very prudently committed to the flames ; then naming the officers of his household and valets who he intended should follow him, he gave orders for his departure, which was fixed for next day. As he was afraid of being insulted by the populace, in coming out of the palace, he slept away early in the morning, by the kitchen door, and getting into a sorry coach, with his confessor and me, safely proceeded for Loeches, a village belonging to him, where his lady had built a magnificent convent of nuns of the dominican order. Thither he repaired in less than four hours, and all his attendants arrived soon after.

CHAP. X.

The anxiety and cares which at first disturbed the repose of the count-duke, and the happy tranquillity by which they were succeeded. The occupations of the minister in his retreat.

MADAM d'Olivarez let her husband set out for Loeches, and staid a few days after him at court, with a design to try, if by her tears and intreaties, she could not effect his being recalled : but in vain did she prostrate herself before their majesties ; the king had no regard to her remonstrances, though artfully prepared ; and the queen, who hated her mortally, beheld her tears with pleasure. The minister's wife was not repulsed for all that ; she humbled herself so far as to implore the good offices of the queen's ladies ; but the fruit which she reaped from her meanness, was to perceive that it excited contempt rather than compassion. Vexed at having taken such humbling steps to no purpose, she went and joined her husband, to grieve with him for the loss of a place, which, under a reign like that of Philip the Fourth, was perhaps the first of the monarchy.

This lady's report of the condition in which she left Madrid, redoubled the affliction of the count-duke : " Your enemies, said she weeping, the duke of Medina Celi, and the other grandees who hate you, incessantly praise the king for having deprived you of the ministry ; and the people celebrate your disgrace with an insolence of joy, as if the end of the national misfortunes was attached to that of your administration."

" Madam, said my master to her, follow my example, and stifle your sorrow ; we must yield to the
tempest

tempest which we cannot divert. I thought, indeed, that I could have perpetuated my favour, even to the end of my life; the ordinary illusion of ministers and favourites, who forget that their fate depends upon their sovereign: has not the duke of Lerma been mistaken as well as I, though he imagined that his purple was the sure guarantee of the eternal duration of his authority?"

In this manner did the count-duke exhort his spouse to arm herself with patience; while he himself was in agitation, which was daily increased by the dispatches which he received from Don Henry, who having remained at court, to observe, took care to inform him exactly of every thing that happened: it was Scipio who brought the letters from that young nobleman, whom he still served, I having quitted him upon his marriage with Donna Juana. The dispatches of this adopted son were always filled with bad news, and unhappily, no others were expected from him. Sometimes, he wrote that the grandees, not contented with rejoicing publicly, at the retreat of the count-duke, were again re-united to turn all his creatures from the posts and employments which they possessed, to replace them with his enemies: another time, he observed that Don Lewis de Haro began to come into favour, and would, in all probability, be made prime-minister. Of all the disagreeable news which my master received, that which seemed to affect him most, was the change made in the viceroyalty of Naples, which the court, solely to mortify him, took from the duke of Medina de las Torres, whom he loved, and gave it to the admiral of Castile, whom he had always hated.

I may venture to say, that during three months, his grace felt nothing in his solitude, but trouble and chagrin; but his confessor, who was a Dominican friar, and with the most solid piety possessed a manly eloquence, had power enough to console him. By
means

means of representing with energy, that he ought to bend his thoughts entirely to his own salvation, he had, with the help of grace, the good fortune to detach his mind from the court. His excellency would no longer hear any news from Madrid, his whole care being now engrossed in preparing for his latter end. Madam d'Olivarez also, making a good use of her retreat, met with a consolation prepared by providence, in the convent which she had founded; there were among the nuns, some holy maidens, whose conversation, full of balm, insensibly sweetened the bitterness of her life: in proportion as my master turned his thoughts from worldly affairs, he became more and more tranquil; and, in this manner, regulated the day. He spent almost the whole morning in hearing mass in the church of the convent, then returned to dinner; after which, he amused himself about two hours in playing at all sorts of games, with me and some other of his most affectionate domestics; then usually retired by himself into his closet, where he remained till sun-set; at which time he took a turn in his garden, or an airing in his coach, to the neighbourhood of his castle, accompanied sometimes by his confessor, and sometimes by me.

One day being alone with him, and admiring the serenity of his countenance, I took the liberty to say, "My lord, allow me to express my joy: from the air of satisfaction in your looks, I conclude that your excellency begins to be accustomed to retirement." "I am already quite familiarized to it, answered he, and though I have been a long time used to business, I protest to thee, child, that I am every day more and more pleased with the quiet and peaceable life which I lead in this place."

C H A P. XI.

The count-duke becomes all of a sudden, sad and thoughtful: the surprizing cause of his melancholy, with its fatal consequence.

HIS grace, in order to vary his occupations, amused himself sometimes, also, in cultivating his garden. One day while I beheld him at work, he said to me in a jocular strain: "Santillane, thou seest a minister banished from Court, turned gardener at Loeches." "My lord, answered I, in the same tone, methinks I see Dionysius, of Syracuse, school-master at Corinth." My master smiled at my reply, and was not at all displeased at the comparison.

All the people in the house were overjoyed to see their master, superior to his disgrace, charmed with a life so different from that which he had always led: when we perceived with sorrow, that he visibly changed: he became gloomy, thoughtful, and sunk into a most profound melancholy. He left off playing with us, and no longer seemed sensible of all that we could invent for his diversion; but locked himself up after dinner in his closet, where he remained alone till night: we imagined that his chagrin had been occasioned by the returning ideas of his past greatness, and in that opinion, left with him the Dominican friar, whose eloquence, however, could not triumph over the melancholy of his grace, which instead of diminishing seemed daily to increase.

It came into my head, that the pensiveness of this minister, might have some particular cause, which he

was unwilling to disclose; and on this conjecture I formed the design of drawing the secret from him: for this purpose, I lay in wait for an opportunity of speaking to him in private, and having found it: "My lord, said I, with an air of respect and affection, may Gil Blas be so bold as to put one question to his master?" "Speak, he replied, I give thee leave." "What (said I) is become of that satisfaction which appeared in your excellency's face? have you no longer that ascendancy which you had once gained over fortune? or does your lost favour excite new regret within you? Would you be plunged again in that abyss of trouble, from which your virtue hath extricated you?" "No, thank heaven, (resumed the minister) my memory is no longer engrossed by the part which I acted at court; I have for ever forgot the honours which I there enjoyed." "Why then (said I) since you have philosophy enough to banish these things from your remembrance, are you so weak as to abandon yourself to a melancholy which alarms us all? What is the matter with you, my dear master? (added I, throwing myself at his feet) you have, doubtless, some secret sorrow that consumes you: will you make a mystery of it to Santillane, whose zeal, fidelity, and discretion you know so well? By what misfortune have I lost your confidence?"

"Thou hast it still, said he, but I confess I have a reluctance to reveal the cause of that sadness with which thou seest me overwhelmed: nevertheless, I cannot resist the intreaties of such a servant and friend as thee. Know then the cause of my disquiet, which is a secret that I could impart to none but Santillane. Yes, continued he, I am a prey to the most dismal melancholy, which gradually consumes my life. I see almost every moment a spectre, which presents itself before me in the most terrible shape. In vain have I said to myself, that it is no more than an illusion, an unsubstantial phantom of my brain; the con-

tinual apparition invests my view, and disturbs my repose. Though my understanding is strong enough to persuade me that this spectre is really nothing, I am notwithstanding weak enough to be afflicted at the vision. This is what thou hast forced me to disclose, added he, and thou mayest judge whether or not I am to blame in concealing from all the world the cause of my melancholy." I was equally grieved and astonished to hear such an extraordinary declaration, which was a strong indication of the machine's being disordered. "My lord, (said I to the minister) is not this occasioned by too little nourishment; for your abstinence is excessive." "That was what I imagined at first, answered he, and to try if it was actually owing to my diet, I have, for some days past, eaten more than usual; but without any effect; the phantom still appears." "It will certainly disappear (said I, to console him); and if your excellency would relax yourself a little, by playing again with your faithful servants, I believe you would soon find yourself delivered from these gloomy vapours."

In a little time after this conversation, his grace fell sick; and finding the affair grow serious, sent to Madrid for two notaries to make his will; as also, for three famous physicians, who had the reputation of curing their patients sometimes. As soon as the arrival of these last was reported in the castle, nothing was heard but groans and lamentations: the servants looked upon the death of their master as just at hand; so much were they prejudiced against these gentlemen, who had brought along with them an apothecary and surgeon, the usual executioners of their prescriptions. They let the notaries do their business; after which they prepared to do their own: being of Dr. Sangrado's principles, in their very first consultation they ordered repeated bleedings; so that, in six days, they reduced the count-duke to extremity, and

on the seventh, delivered him entirely from his apparition *.

Upon the death of this minister, a deep and sincere sorrow reigned in the castle of Loeches : all his domestics wept bitterly : far from consoling themselves for his loss, with the certainty of being comprehended in his will, there was not one among them who would not have renounced his legacy, to recal him to life. As for me, who had been beloved by him, and whose attachment flowed from pure personal affection, I was more afflicted than all the rest ; and question whether I shed more tears for Antonia, than for the count-duke.

* The count-duke died on the 12th of July 1645, not at Loeches, but at Toro in New-Castile. His death, according to report. having been hastened by his relations, who seeing him become more and more odious to the people, even in spite of his retreat, were afraid of his suffering some new ignominy to the further disgrace of his family.

C H A P. XII.

The transaction at the castle of Loeches; after the death of the Count-Duke; and the departure of Santillane.

THE minister, according to his own direction, being buried without noise and pomp, in the convent of nuns, by the sound of our lamentations; after the funeral, Madam d'Olivarez ordered the will to be read, with which all the domestics had reason to be satisfied. Every one had a legacy proportioned to his station; the least was two thousand crowns: mine was the most considerable; his grace having bequeathed to me ten thousand pistoles, as a proof of his particular affection. He did not forget the hospitals, and founded annual service in several convents.

Madam d'Olivarez sent all the domestics to Madrid, to receive their legacies from the steward Don Raymond Caporis, who had orders to pay them; but I could not accompany them, being detained at the castle seven or eight days by a high fever, which was the fruit of my affliction. In this situation, I was not abandoned by the Dominican friar: that good clergyman had conceived an affection for me; and interesting himself in my salvation, asked, when he saw me in a fair way, what I intended to do, "I don't know, my good father, (answered I): I have not, as yet, determined with myself on that score: at some moments, I am tempted to shut myself up in a cell, and do penance." "Those are precious moments!" cried the Dominican: Signior de Santillane, you will do well to profit by them. I advise you

as a friend without your ceasing to be a layman, to retire, for example, into our convent at Madrid, to make yourself a benefactor to it, by a donation of all your fortune, and die there under the habit of St. Dominick. A great many people expiate a worldly life, by such an end."

I was then in such a disposition of mind, that I began to relish the advice, and told his reverence, that I would consider of it. But having consulted Scipio, whom I saw immediately after the monk, he inveighed against that sentiment, which seemed to him the whim of a sick person. "Fy! Signior de Santillane, said he, can you be pleased with such a retreat? Will not your house at Lirias afford one much more agreeable? If you was delighted with it heretofore, you will have a much better relish for the sweets of it, now that you are of an age much more proper for tasting the beauties of nature."

The son of Coscolina had no great difficulty in making me change my opinion. "Friend, said I, thou hast prevailed over the Dominican. I see it will be better for me to return to my castle: and fix my resolution accordingly: we will repair to Lirias, as soon as I shall be in a condition to travel: and this happened very soon; for the fever having left me in a little time, I found myself strong enough to put my design in execution. Scipio and I went first to Madrid, the sight of which city no longer gave me that pleasure which I had formerly felt; as I knew that almost all its inhabitants abhorred the memory of a minister, of whom I preserved the most tender remembrance, I could not behold it with a favourable eye: and therefore staid in it only five or six days, which Scipio employed in making preparations for our departure for Lirias. While he was busy about our equipage, I went to Caporis, who gave me my legacy in doubloons: I likewise visited the receivers of the commanderies, on whom I had pensions, took

measures with them for the payment ; and in a word put all my affairs in order.

On the evening before our departure, I asked the son of Coscolina if he had taken leave of Don Henry. " Yes, answered he, we this morning parted good friends : he assured me, that he was sorry for my leaving him ; but if he was satisfied with me, I was not so with him : it is not enough that the valet pleases the master ; the master ought at the same time to please the valet ; otherwise they are very ill met. Besides, added he, Don Henry makes but a pitiful figure at court, where he is sunk into the lowest contempt. He is even pointed at in the streets, and every body calls him the son of the Genoese. So you may guess whether or not it is agreeable to a lad of honour, to serve a man in such disgrace."

At length, we set out from Madrid early one morning, and took the road to Cuenca, in the following order and equipage : my confident and I were mounted in a chaise and pair, conducted by a postilion ; three moyles loaded with our baggage and money, and led by two grooms, followed close after ; and two lusty lacqueys, chosen by Scipio, mounted on mules, and armed to the teeth, brought up the rear : the grooms wore sabres, and the postilion had two good pistols at his saddle-bow. As we were in all seven men, six of whom were very resolute, I travelled merrily, without any apprehension of losing my legacy. Our moyles proudly sounding their bells, in the villages through which we passed, the peasants ran to their doors, to see the march of our equipage, which they imagined to belong to some grandee going to take possession of a vice-royalty.

CH A P. XIII.

Gil Blas returns to his castle, where he is overjoyed to find Seraphina, his god-daughter, marriageable : and falls in love with another lady.

I Spent fifteen days on the road to Lirias, being under no necessity of travelling fast : all that I desired was, to arrive at it safely ; and my wish was accomplished. The sight of my castle at first inspired me with some melancholy thoughts, in recalling the memory of Antonia : but I soon banished them, by entertaining my fancy with more pleasant ideas : and this I could the more easily do, as twenty years, which were elapsed since her death, had a good deal weakened the force of my sorrow.

As soon as I entered the castle, Beatrice and her daughter came with great eagerness to salute me ; then the father, mother, and child hugged one another with transports of joy, which charmed me.

After their mutual embraces, I looked at my god-daughter attentively, saying : " Can this be that Seraphina whom I left in the cradle, when I departed from Lirias ! I am overjoyed to see her again, so tall and so handsome, we must have her settled for life." " How, my dear god-father, (cried she, reddening at my last words) you have seen me but for a moment, and you already talk of getting rid of me !" " No, my child, (answered I) we don't intend to lose you by marriage : we must have a husband who will enjoy you, without robbing your parents of

your company, and in a manner live with us altogether."

"Such an one offers at present, said Beatrice: a gentleman of this country, having seen Seraphina one day at mass, in the village-chapel, fell in love with her. He has been to visit me, declared his passion, and asked my consent. If you had it, (said I to him) you would be never the nearer; Seraphina depends upon her father and god-father, who alone can dispose her. All that I can do for you, is to inform them, by a letter, of your demand, which, I own, does honour to my daughter. Really, gentlemen, added she, I was going to write about it immediately: but now that you are returned, you shall do in it what you think proper."

"But, said Scipio, what character has this *Hidalgo*?* is he, like most of your small gentry, proud of his nobility, and insolent to plebeians?" "Not at all, replied Beatrice: he is a sweet tempered young man, extremely polite, has a good mien, and is not yet full thirty." "You draw an agreeable picture of that cavalier, said I to Beatrice: pray, what is his name?" "Don Juan de Jutella, answered Scipio's wife: he has but lately succeeded to his father, and lives in a castle about a league from hence with a young sister, who is under his care." "I have formerly, said I, heard of this gentleman's family, which is one of the most noble in the kingdom of Valencia." "I esteem his nobility, cried Scipio, less than the qualities of his heart and understanding; and this Don Juan will suit us very well, provided he be a man of honour." "He has the reputation of one, said Seraphina, joining in the conversation: the inhabitants of Lirias, who knew him,

* *Hidalgo*, literally, the son of somebody, is an appellation given to a country gentleman in Spain.

give him the best of characters." At these words of my god-daughter, I smiled to her father ; who having likewise observed them, concluded, that his daughter was not displeased at her gallant.

This cavalier soon got notice of our arrival at Lirias ; and two days after appeared at our castle. He saluted us gracefully ; and, far from contradicting by his presence what Beatrice had said to his advantage, his behaviour made us conceive an high opinion of his merit. He told us, that as our neighbour, he had come to congratulate us upon our happy return ; and we received him with all the courtesy in our power : but this visit, which was made out of pure civility, passed in mutual compliments ; and Don Juan, without having mentioned a syllable of his passion for Seraphina, retired, only desiring our permission to profit by a neighbourhood, which he foresaw would be very agreeable to him. When he was gone Beatrice, asking our opinion of the gentleman, we answered, that he had prepossessed us in his favour ; and that, in all appearance, fortune could not offer a better match for Seraphina.

The very next day I went out after dinner with Coscolina's son, to return the visit which we owed to Don Juan. We took the road to his castle, conducted by a guide, who (when we had walked about three quarters of an hour) said, " There is the castle of Don Juan de Jutella." In vain did we cast our eyes around the country ; it was a long time before we perceived it ; nay, we did not discover it till we arrived at the gate ; for it was situated at the foot of a mountain, in the middle of a wood, whose lofty trees concealed it from the view. The house denoted the nobility, more than the opulence of its master ; however, when we entered, we found the craziness of the building compensated by the richness of the furniture.

Don Juan received us in a very handsome hall, where he introduced us to a lady whom he called his sister Dorothea, and who seemed to be about the age of nineteen or twenty. She was full dressed, because having expected our visit, she was desirous of appearing as amiable as she could; and offering herself to my view, in all her charms, she made the same impression that Antonia had made upon my heart; that is, I was disconcerted: but concealed my disorder so well, that Scipio himself did not observe it. Our conversation, like that of the preceding day, turned upon the mutual pleasure we should enjoy in visiting one another, and living together in good neighbourhood. He did not, as yet, speak to us of Seraphina, and we gave him no encouragement to declare his passion, resolving that it should first come from himself. During the conversation, I frequently eyed Dorothea, though I affected to look at her as little as possible; and every time our eyes met, she darted fresh arrows into my soul. I must say, however, for the sake of truth, that this beloved object was not a perfect beauty; for, though her skin was of a dazzling whiteness, and her lips of the complexion of the rose, her nose was somewhat too long, and her eyes too little. Nevertheless the whole together quite enchanted me.

In short, I did not leave the castle of Jutella as I had entered it; and on my return to Livias, my mind was so wholly possessed by Dorothea, that I saw nothing but her, and she was the sole subject of my conversation. "How! master! (said Scipio, looking at me with astonishment) you are very full of Don Juan's sister. Hath she made a conquest of your heart?" "Yes, friend, (answered I) and I blush at my own weakness. O heavens! must I, who, since Antonia's death, have beheld a thousand beauties with indifference, meet with one, at my age, who, in spite of all my endeavours, inflames me with love!" "Well, Sir,

Sir, (replied Coscolina's son) you ought to rejoice, instead of complaining, at the adventure: there is nothing ridiculous in a man of your age being in love, and time hath not as yet so furrowed your brow, as to deprive you of the hope of pleasing. Take my advice, when next you see Don Juan boldly demand his sister in marriage; he cannot refuse her to such a person as you: and besides, if it is absolutely necessary that Dorothea's husband should be a gentleman, are not you one? You have letters of nobility, and that is enough for your posterity, when time shall have shrowded these letters with that thick veil which covers the origin of all great families: after four or five generations, the race of Santillane will be the most illustrious."

CHAPTER the last.

The double marriage celebrated at Lirias, which concludes the history of Gil Blas de Santillane.

SCIPIO, by this discourse, encouraged me to declare myself the lover of Dorothea, without considering that he exposed me to the risk of a refusal: I could not, however, determine upon it without trembling: for, although I looked younger than I was, and could have sunk ten good years at least of my age, I could not help thinking I had good reason to doubt of my pleasing a young beauty. I resolved, nevertheless, to risk the demand, as soon as I should see her brother, who, for his part, being uncertain of obtaining my god-daughter, was not without abundance of anxiety.

He returned to my house next morning, just as I had done dressing, and said, "Signior de Santillane, I am come to-day to talk with you about a serious affair." I carried him into a closet, where, coming to the point at once, "I believe (continued he) that you are not ignorant of my errand. I love Seraphina; and as you can sway her father to any thing, pray render him favourable to me; procure for me the object of my passion, and let me owe the happiness of my life to you." "Signior Don Juan, (answered I) since you come to the business at once, give me leave to follow your example; and, after having promised you my good offices with the father of my god-daughter, to demand your interest with your sister in my behalf."

At these last words, Don Juan expressed an agreeable surprize, from which I drew a favourable omen. "Is it possible, (cried he) that Dorothea made a conquest of your heart yesterday?" "I am quite charmed

charmed with her ! (said I) and will think myself the happiest of mankind, if my demand is agreeable to you both." "Of that you may be assured, (he replied :) noble as we are, we will not disdain your alliance." "I am very glad (answered I) that you make no difficulty in receiving a plebeian for your brother-in-law : I esteem you the more on that account ; and in so doing, you shew your good understanding ; but, were you even so vain as to refuse your sister's hand to any body but a gentleman, know, that I could satisfy your pride : I have laboured twenty years under the minister ; and the king, to recompence the services which I had done the state, has gratified me with letters of nobility, which you shall see." So saying, I took my patent out of the drawer where it lay concealed, and presented it to the gentleman, who read it attentively, from begining to end, with vast satisfaction. "This is excellent ! (said he, restoring the papers : Dorothea is yours." "And you (cried I) may depend upon Seraphina."

These two marriages being thus resolved upon, all that remained, was to know, if the brides would consent with a good grace : for Don Juan and I being equally delicate, did not intend to force their inclinations. That gentleman returned, therefore, to his castle of Jutella, to propose me to his sister ; and I assembled Scipio, Beatrice, and their daughter, to communicate the conversation I had with that cavalier. Beatrice was for accepting him without hesitation ; and Seraphina, by her silence, shewed that she was of her mother's opinion. As to the father, he was not indeed averse to the match ; but expressed some uneasiness about the dowry, which, he said, must be given to the gentleman, whose castle had such pressing need of repairs. I stopt Scipio's mouth, telling him, that affair concerned me, and that I would make a present to my god-daughter of four thousand pistoles for her portion.

Don

Don Juan returning that very evening, "Your affairs (said I to him) succeed to a miracle; I wish mine may be in no worse condition." "They are also on an excellent footing, (he replied) I had no occasion to employ authority, to obtain Dorothea's consent: your person is to her liking, and she is pleased with your behaviour. You was apprehensive of your being disagreeable to her; and she is more justly afraid, that having nothing but her heart and hand to offer"—— "What more would I have! (cried I, in a transport of joy;) since the charming Dorothea has no reluctance to unite her fate with mine, I ask no more! I am rich enough to marry her without a portion, and the possession of her alone will crown my wishes!"

Don Juan and I, well pleased with having brought matters happily so far, resolved to hasten our nuptials by supressing all superfluous ceremonies. I brought this gentleman and Seraphina's Parents together; and after they had agreed upon the conditions of the marriage, he took his leave, promising to return next day with Dorothea. The desire I had of appearing agreeable to that lady, made me employ three hours, at least, in adjusting and adorning myself, pleased with my own person. It is only a pleasure for a young man to prepare himself for visiting his mistress: but to one who begins to grow old, it is quite a fatigue. However, I was more happy than I deserved to be.

When next I saw Don Juan's sister, she regarded me with such a favourable eye, that I imagined myself still good for something. I had a long conversation with her, was charmed with her disposition; and concluded, that, with delicate behaviour, and a great deal of complaisance, I should become a beloved spouse. Elevated with this agreeable hope, I sent to Valencia for two notaries, who drew up the contract of marriage; then we had recourse to the

curate

curate of Paterna, who came to Lirias, and married Don Juan and me to our mistresses.

Thus for the second time, did I light the torch of Hymen, and had no cause to repent my conduct. Dorothea, like a virtuous wife, made a pleasure of her duty; and, sensible of my care to anticipate her desires, soon attached herself to me, as much as if I had been a young man. On the other hand, Don Juan and my god-daughter were inflamed with mutual ardour; and, what is very singular, the two sisters-in-law conceived the most passionate and sincere friendship for one another. As for my part, I found so many good qualities in my brother-in-law, that I felt a real affection for him; and he did not repay it with ingratitude. In short, the union that reigned among us was such, that in the evening, when we parted, only till next day, that separation was not performed without pain; so that, of the two families, we resolved to make one, which should live sometimes at the castle of Lirias, and sometimes at that of Jutella, which, for this purpose, received great reparations, by the help of his excellency's pistoles.

I have for three years, gentle reader, led a delicious life with people whom I love so much; and to crown my felicity, heaven has blessed me with two children, whom I piously believe to be my own, and whose education shall be the amusement of my old age.

The End of the Twelfth and last Book.

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To the PUBLIC.

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is a branch of learning now more cultivated in England than in any other part of the globe; those persons, therefore, who speak or write with impropriety, are even without an excuse to palliate their ignorance. Grammar, which contains the rules for speaking or writing any language properly, has lately been greatly attended to by the most celebrated men among us. Many ingenious and interesting articles are disseminated in the variety of Dictionaries already extant; with all these performances we shall endeavour to enrich this work; being determined that nothing valuable shall escape our vigilance and attention. The whole substance of every ingenious production, on the subject of Grammar, shall be transplanted into THE NEW ROYAL ENGLISH DICTIONARY.

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C. MARRIOTT.

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